

Minutes: Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC)

August 26, 2005 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The Cornhusker Hotel, Lancaster Rooms 4-5-6

Lincoln, Nebraska

Denise Wright, vice-chair, opened the meeting of the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council on August 26, 2005 at 9:00 a.m. at the Cornhusker Hotel, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Members present: Sue Adams, Mary A Frank, Kathy Anderson, Christine Carr, Kim Chase, Marcia Corr, Eric Dunning, Carolyn Edwards, Sally Hansen, Mary Jo Iwan, Barbara Jackson, Susan Kringle, Kim Madsen, Paul Matson, Betty Medinger, Ruth Miller, Tammy Mittelstaedt, Suzan Obermiller, Cindy Prater, Roger Reikofski, Barbara Schliesser, Connie Shonka, Derek Weimer, Carey Winkler, Carolyn Witte, Denise Wright.

Members absent: Mark Hald, Ali Hettenbaugh, Kris Elmshaeuser, Lea Ann Johnson, Chris Kline, Pat Nauroth, Mary Beth Rathe, Todd Reckling, Patti Waltman, Christine Weber, Sandy Willett

Also in attendance:

ECICC Staff: Terry Rohren, facilitator; Susan Dahm, secretary.

Technical assistants: Rae Anderson, *National Child Care Information Center*, Nina Baker, *PTI-Nebraska*; Betty Lammle, *Administration for Children and Families, Region VII*; Mark Smith, *Monroe-Meyer Institute*; *Early Childhood Training Center:* Carol Fichter, Carol Puffer; *HHSS:* Lynne Brehm, Linda Shandera, Micaela Swigle; *NDE:* Melody Hobson, Eleanor Kirkland.

AGENDA:

The Family Leadership Team met at 8:00 a.m. before the opening of the regular ECICC meeting.

1. Opening and Announcements:

- i. Terry Rohren announced that vice-chairperson, Denise Wright, would preside over the meeting in the place of chairperson, Lea Ann Johnson, who had unexpected work responsibilities. Terry also announced that Lea Ann plans to continue as a member of ECICC, but chose to relinquish her position as chairperson for the next term. Appointment of a new chairperson is pending with the Governor's Office.
- ii. **Approval of minutes**
Motion, seconded: To approve the ECICC minutes of May 13, 2005, as submitted and provided to members in the pre-meeting packet. There was no discussion. The motion to approve the minutes passed by unanimous voice vote. There were no abstentions.
- iii. **Actions since the last meeting**
 - Terry Rohren reviewed actions that had taken place since the last ECICC meeting on May 13, 2005 and called attention to several activities, which included:
 - o Electing Derek Weimer to represent parents on the ECICC Steering Committee.
 - o General satisfaction expressed on two surveys about meeting room set up and the ECICC web site.
 - o Success in scheduling a meeting with the Governor at 7:45 a.m. on September 16, 2005 (to be discussed later in the meeting).
 - o Thanking members who will be completing their ECICC terms on September 30th: Carolyn Edwards, Pat Nauroth, Mary Beth Rathe, Christine Weber, and Sandy Willett.

- Requesting additional suggestions for persons to fill 10-12 vacancies in the ECICC membership. Recommendations will be reviewed by the Steering Committee and forwarded to the Governor's Office, which makes appointments to the ECICC.
- Marcia Corr informed the membership about the passage of LB 577. The new legislation, beginning in 2006-2007, will allow school districts to claim 4 years olds in their state aid formula if the school had had a preschool grant-funded program for three years or had had an approved non-grant-funded preschool for three years. Marcia also reported that the Legislature had appropriated \$1.6 million to fund additional preschool grant programs.
- Nina Baker reported that she had begun taking photos for the recommended ECICC picture directory and asked members for their cooperation in finishing the process.

2. Family Story

Cindy Prater presented the family story from her viewpoint as an early childhood special educator with ESU 8. She told about her life growing up on a reservation and presented several "snapshots" of how distance affects families, education, and availability of services in rural Nebraska. Her scenarios included distances that children and families must travel for education and medical services with no transportation options, poor roads, time required to travel, as well as scenarios of poverty, unemployment, and migratory life style with no community support. She also touched on the special needs of children with disabilities and the limitations in delivery of services often seen in rural situations.

3. Committees/Working Groups

Members and technical assistants met from 10:00 a.m. to noon in three breakout groups: the Gaps and Barriers Committee, the Legislative and Communications Committee, and the Financial Task Force,

4. Public Comment

- Rae Anderson invited members to take materials from the National Child Care Information Center that she had placed on display. She gave information about their website and asked members to contact her for more information.
- Betty Medinger informed the group that a steering committee is being organized for the public awareness campaign. She also called attention to "Born to Learn" resource materials that are funded by the Buffet Foundation and specific to Nebraska.

5. Meeting with the Governor

The membership discussed representation and topics for the meeting with Governor Heinemann on September 16. It was agreed that Lea Ann Johnson, Denise Wright, Paul Matson, Carey Winkler, and Mary Afrank would represent the ECICC at the meeting. Members were provided with a list of possible topics for the meeting, which included expressing appreciation for the support of LB 577 and other early childhood initiatives, updates on current ECICC work, and showing support for the Together for Kids and Families Strategic Plan and the State Board of Education's Early Childhood Policy Study, and general discussion about the Medicaid Reform Commission. Members discussed the topics, offered advice, and made suggestions for additional topics.

6. Report Outs from Working Sessions

• Family Leadership Team

- Carey Winkler relayed information from their group about PTI-Nebraska workshops that are held at the center in Omaha on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month. She said that PTI will also offer information workshops to provide support to parents on issues surrounding parent rights and the IFSP and IEP. Local workshops will be presented in homes or other sites for groups of 10 or more.

- The work group discussed the use of the “D” to designate parents of children with disabilities and stated their preference to discontinue its use.
- Eleanor Kirkland met with the Family Team to review the HSSCO self-assessment survey.
- Mark Smith provided updates on IDEA reauthorization, the timeline for federal regulations, and changes to Rule 51.
- The Family Leadership Team expects to continue communication among Council families between meetings by using e-mail and phone.
- **Gaps and Barriers Committee (GBC)**
 - Sue Obermiller thanked the GBC members who met on August 25, 2005, to provide input to the State Performance Plan for IDEA-Part C, which is required by the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).
 - Sue reviewed other topics discussed by the GBC including Head Start reauthorization, and a CAPTA update, and the possibility of a request for ECICC input during the October 17-19 OSEP verification visit.
 - Sue brought a recommendation from the GBC to support the Nebraska Department of Education’s application for a General Supervision Enhancement Grant (GSEG) to support development of early childhood outcomes and development of a new family survey to be used for data required by OSEP.

Action:

 - Motion, seconded: To support the application for the GSEG as recommended by the Gaps and Barriers Committee. The motion carried by voice vote.
 - Sue reported that the GBC plans to meet on December 8, 2005, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. to review reports from several groups that have been collecting data on gaps and barriers. The GBC will use the data for strategic planning to establish a focus for the next year. The GBC will also meet during the regular breakout session of the ECICC meeting on December 9.
- **Financing Task Force**

Ruth Miller and Betty Medinger reported on the work and progress of the task force during the last three months and informed the Council about their recommendation to conduct an economic impact study of child care that is specific to Nebraska. The study would be conducted using a methodology from Cornell University that looks at child care as an industry and studies its impact from a business perspective. Missouri, Kansas, and Iowa have recently finished similar studies. The task force would need to identify funding and a group to conduct the study.

Action:

 - Motion, seconded: To endorse the Financing Task Force’s recommendation to conduct an economic impact study of child care in Nebraska and to identify funding and a group to conduct the study. Following discussion, the motion passed by unanimous voice vote.
- **Legislative and Communications Committee (LCC)**
 - Derek Weimer reported on the work session and between-meeting conference calls held by the LCC in which they discussed the meeting with the Governor, prepared a handout for the Council on pros and cons regarding proposed Medicaid reform, and looked at the nomination of John Roberts to the Supreme Court as it pertains to his involvement in litigations regarding individuals with disabilities. Derek invited members to ask for more information from the LCC if they are interested in these issues.
 - Derek informed the Council about the LCC’s discussions concerning methamphetamine. He presented a recommendation from the LCC that the Council look at the impact of meth on young children and make it the focus of the February 10, 2006 Council meeting, with the expectation of developing recommendations about the topic for the next legislative session.

Action:

- Motion, seconded: To make the topic of methamphetamine the focus of the February 2006 meeting.
- The motion was discussed and amended: To make methamphetamine the theme of the family story, provide a meeting emphasis on methamphetamine and substance use and abuse, and to empower the Steering Committee to make the final decision on meeting content based on other Council responsibilities for matters needing attention. The amendment was accepted.
- The motion as amended carried by unanimous voice vote. There were no abstentions.
- The LCC asked Terry Rohren to continue to provide updates on Medicaid reform.
- The LCC asked that the minutes of their work sessions and conference calls be provided to the membership in the pre-meeting packets.

7. Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) Five-Year Plan

Eleanor Kirkland provided a PowerPoint presentation about the history of HSSCO establishment and purposes, their priority areas, and actions in which they are currently engaged. She asked Council members and technical assistants to complete a self-assessment survey for use by the HSSCO in planning and grant applications. Eleanor responded to questions from the group on how the Council might provide input to the work of the HSSCO and about linkages between the ECICC and other groups.

8. Together for Kids and Families

- Lynne Brehm distributed draft copies of the strategic plan, “Together for Kids and Families.” She reviewed the purpose of the grant project and the strategy of the work groups in developing the strategic plan and noted that ECICC is the advisory body for the project.
- Next steps in the project include gathering responses to the draft and incorporating suggestions for revisions. Lynne asked Council members to forward their responses to her by September 9. The final draft will be presented to the HHSS Policy Cabinet. An application for funding to implement the plan has been written. It is anticipated that the strategic plan project will be finished by December 2005.
- Barb Jackson suggested that the strategic plan be adopted as a “state plan” that other groups could use to guide work and to build on by fitting initiatives with strategic plan priorities.
- Betty Lammle complimented Lynne on the collaborative nature of the project.

9. Early Childhood Policy Study

Marcia Corr and Melody Hobson reported on the progress of the Early Childhood Policy Study using a PowerPoint presentation. They reviewed information received through the State Board of Education’s Policy Partner Forums that were attended by over 400 participants across the state. The forums had good representation from all stakeholders, with the exception of business. The State Board of Education will discuss the study at its September work session and will act on the plan at their October meeting. Marcia noted that the study gives voice from over 750 people across the state and that it connects with the objectives of the Together for Kids and Families strategic plan. The report may be found on the NDE web site, <http://www.nde.state.ne.us/>.

Action:

- Motion, seconded: To show ECICC support to the State Board of Education for the Early Childhood Policy Study and its recommendations. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

10. Nebraska Quality Rating System for Child Care Centers

- Carolyn Edwards distributed a draft of a proposed quality rating system for child care centers. She explained the system and its potential use as a consumer guide and as a rating system to evaluate programs for funding. She reported how other states are using quality-rating scales and how the rating can support providers by creating consumer demand for higher quality. Carolyn

explained the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the system and how the data will be gathered. Midwest Child Care Research Consortium is conducting the project with a Nebraska team made up of agencies, providers, and higher education representation. The system will be piloted in the fall with volunteer licensed providers of family and center-based programs in both rural and urban areas. Parent focus groups will also respond to the system during the pilot phase.

- Carrie Witte suggested the use of mentors to help programs move through the accreditation process. She also expressed concern about programs becoming inaccessible to lower-income families because of rate increases due to higher quality.

11. Early Childhood Outcomes

Barb Schliesser reported that the first meeting to discuss options to measure early childhood outcomes would be held on September 7, 2005. The meeting will be reported on at the next Council meeting in addition to information about positive behavioral supports.

The Council adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Next meeting: December 9, 2005, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

MEETING HANDOUTS:

- ✓ Roster Update, August 26, 2005
- ✓ Discussion: Meeting with the Governor
- ✓ ECICC Results of Two Surveys (room set up and web site)
- ✓ Information Report from the ECICC Legislative and Communications Standing Committee, August 26, 2005: "Update on State and National Medicaid Reform"
- ✓ Opening Presentation—Administrators' Days 2005: "Building the New Midwest Offense," NDE Commissioner Doug Christensen and State Board President Fred Meyer
- ✓ Together for Kids and Families Strategic Plan-draft August 2005
- ✓ Early Childhood Policy Study Report to ECICC, August 26, 2005—PowerPoint presentation handout
- ✓ Nebraska Quality Rating System for Centers-draft August 1, 2005

Also available for pickup:

- ✓ Nebraska Early Childhood Policy Study—draft #3, June 20, 2005
- ✓ Leading the Way to Quality Early Care and Education: A Child Care Bureau Technical Assistance Tool 2005—User's Guide CD
- ✓ NCCIC information handouts
- ✓ Shaping the Future: Region VII Head Start Association